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Rise in jobless families during the COVID period

Media Release

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i Source: [Labour Force Status of Families, June 2020](#)

There were 157,000 more jobless families in June 2020 than in June 2019, according to the latest information released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

Head of Labour Statistics at the ABS Bjorn Jarvis said: "With the disruption of COVID-19, there was an 11.5 per cent increase in families without an employed person in them, between June 2019 and June 2020. This was larger than the annual increases seen in earlier economic downturns in 1982 (9.9 per cent) and 1992 (9.0 per cent).

Around 21.2 per cent of all families were jobless families in June 2020, up from 19.3 per cent in June 2019.

Mr Jarvis said not all jobless families were searching for work, as they included retired couples and parents out of the work force while caring for infants.

"Families with dependants have a lower level of joblessness than older families, but the extent of job losses during the COVID-19 period resulted in a larger annual increase in the number of jobless families with dependants (17.0 per cent)," Mr Jarvis said.

"Couple families with children under 15 account for around two thirds of all families with dependents (65.4 per cent), and their rate of joblessness rose from 3.6 per cent in June 2019 to 5.3 per cent in June 2020."

The information also showed:

- There were 7.2 million families in June 2020, an increase of 1.1 million since 2010
- 1 in 7 families were one parent families (14.2 per cent)
- For one parent families with dependants, about 1 in 3 were jobless families (32.1 per

cent)

- Of the 6.1 million couples in June 2020, 1.4 per cent were same-sex couples, up from 0.6 per cent ten years ago

Further details can be found in [Labour Force Status of Families \(https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-status-families/latest-release\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-status-families/latest-release), available for free download from [www.abs.gov.au \(http://www.abs.gov.au/\)](http://www.abs.gov.au).

Media notes

- For statistical purposes, the ABS defines a family in Labour Force statistics as two or more related people who live in the same household. Households can contain more than one family, depending on relationships within the household. Family members who usually live in different households are not included.
- A dependant is a family member who is either under 15 years of age or aged 15-19 years and attending school or aged 15-24 years and attending a tertiary education institution full time. In order to be classified as a dependant, the person must have no partner or child of his/her own in the same household.
- Jobless families occur when all of the family members aged 15 years and over in the same family are either unemployed or not in the labour force. Some jobless families can be supported by other family units in a multi-family household.
- The rate of jobless families is a different concept to the unemployment rate. Jobless persons include those who are unemployed as well as those who are not in the labour force (such as retirees).
- Larger families tend to have a lower rate of joblessness, as it requires that every member over 15 needs to be jobless. This factors into the different jobless rates between couple families (which have at least two working age adults) and one parent families (which might have only one working age adult).
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